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Travel Daily

First with the news

Wednesday 2nd July 2014

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Motive Travel going public

WESTERN Australian agency group Motive Travel has been announced as the third travel acquisition by listed group Red Gum Resources, which is set to change its name to The Australian Travel Group (**TD** 26 Jun).

Red Gum has already announced the acquisition of Asia Escape Holidays and HolidayPlanet, with the deals to be settled simultaneously in conjunction with a capital raising.

The Motive Travel deal adds a retail element to the wholesale and online operations, with Motive owner George Michalczyk to join the senior management team of the company.

The combined annual turnover of the three travel businesses is more than \$85 million, with the Motive purchase set to strengthen the group's corporate and special interest group travel sectors.

Red Gum is buying Motive for \$2 million, representing a four times multiple of the company's anticipated EBITDA figures for the year post settlement.

This will be in the form of \$1m

worth of Australian Travel Group shares and \$1m in cash.

Incoming chairman Alan Dodson said he was delighted that "such a reputable travel industry identity as George Michalczyk had chosen to join the Australian Travel Grp."

He said Motive Travel's specialist expertise would complement the businesses of Asia Escape and Holiday Planet.

A prospectus is set to be lodged in the coming weeks as part of the company's proposed relisting.

Altéa agt advantage

AMADEUS is today spruiking the benefits of working with an Altéa-connected airline - **see cover** - which has the advantage of bookings becoming a shared PNR, enabling flight updates to be immediately relayed to agents.

Seven pages of news

Travel Daily today has seven pages of news and photos, a front cover page for **Amadeus** plus full pages from: (**click**):

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Aus uptick for Finnair

FINNAIR country sales manager Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia Geoff Stone says the carrier is predicting a 50% spike in bookings by Australian travellers for the year compared to 2013.

Stone said the desire among Aussies to travel to Europe via Asia was still strong, which works well with Finnair's flight schedule.

The carrier will add three more destinations in Russia to its network over the next six weeks.

QF relaunch Hamilton Is

QANTAS Group has introduced a "two-brand strategy" to access the Great Barrier Reef from Sydney following the relaunch of Qantas mainline services to Hamilton Island today.

The reintroduction of thrice weekly flights in peak season (Jul and Sep to Jan) and bi-weekly in off-peak periods, complements the Group's daily Jetstar service to HTI out of the NSW capital.

Qantas previously operated to Hamilton Island close to 10 years ago and has re-established the link due to passenger demand for a "premium" flight alternative.

Qantas Domestic ceo Lyell Strambi this morning said: "Our customers told us they wanted direct access to The Whitsundays on a premium leisure service from Sydney. Today we respond to that demand."

Passengers flying with Qantas to HTI will be provided with a meal and checked baggage allowance as part of the fare.

Strambi told *Travel Daily* prior to this morning's launch flight that Qantas was committed to the domestic market, with the Sydney-Hamilton Island service the fourth leisure destination to be introduced in 2014.

"This is great news for tourism and The Whitsundays' 74 tropical islands, including the renowned Hamilton Island and the ultra-luxury One&Only Hayman Island."

More from Qantas & Hamilton Island in tomorrow's issue of *TD*.

New Cal comp winner

AIRCALIN has announced the winner of last month's comp that featured exclusively in *Travel Daily* as Louise Dunell from Atlantic Pacific Travel.

Louise has won a four night holiday to New Caledonia for two, which includes return Economy Class flights and accom at Le Stanley Hotel & Suites Noumea.

For those that missed out, *TD* is giving away a six-night holiday to Mauritius during Jul - see page 7.

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Amadeus Air NZ fares

AIR New Zealand has renewed its agreement with Amadeus which will see the airlines suite of airfares available to travel agents in Australia, New Zealand and globally through the GDS.

SQ Hols GP package

A NEW package that combines the action of the 2014 Formula One Singapore Airlines Grand Prix and five nights in the Maldives is now available through Singapore Airlines Holidays.

Included are four nights in Singapore, a three day Bay Grandstand pass to the F1 GP, all transfers and daily breakfast.

The package is priced from \$7,521ppts - call 1300 728 998.

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Travel Daily

First with the news

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Fed Govt winds up T-QUAL

THE Federal Government has closed down the National Tourism Accreditation Framework, known as T-QUAL Accreditation, with the decision taking effect from 30 Jun.

The move comes due to a tender for industry management of the scheme (**TD** 23 Apr) failing to find a sustainable and self-funding business model for its ongoing operation.

Austrade will now work with T-QUAL stakeholders and current accredited quality assurance schemes to wind up framework of the system, with Govt funding having expired at the end of Jun.

Existing accreditation schemes that were endorsed under T-QUAL will continue to operate, however the industry symbol, or 'T-QUAL Tick' will no longer be used and must now be removed from marketing collateral by all previously accredited endorsees.

The National Tourism Alliance has reacted swiftly, calling the wind-up a broken Govt promise.

"Without an appointed Minister for Tourism, there remains a risk that a \$100 billion national industry that employs 1 million people does not receive due attention when Government is making significant decisions that affect tourism," the NTA said.

For more info, [CLICK HERE](#).

Tigerair loads tumble

PASSENGER numbers flying on Tigerair Australia rose 12% in May compared to the same time last year, Virgin Australia said today.

However, revenue load factors plummeted nearly 15 points as available seats soared 36.6%.

Virgin cited the launch of the no-frills offshoot's Brisbane ops for the decline, but said despite the domestic market remaining "challenging", early indicators suggest average load factors are showing signs of improvement.

Meanwhile, Virgin Australia reported a 10.8% increase in international passenger numbers during May, rising to 219,500.

VA's domestic passenger traffic rose 2.5% year-on-year to 1.38m movements, supporting positive yield for May financial year 2014.

Collectively, Virgin Australia said its operating performance for May had been impacted by "weak consumer sentiment in the domestic market."



Window Seat

DUBAI is making a concerted play for a larger share of the US\$3 billion diving and snorkel tourism market, announcing plans to open an underwater theme park.

Entitled the Pearl of Dubai, the park will be situated in waters just off the island grouping known as 'The World' and will be designed by the art team who worked on the *Avatar* film.

At around 234 square metres in size, the park will offer divers the ability to navigate through an artificial ancient city layout complete with sunken masonry and statues of god-like figures.

No time-frame has yet been specified for the Pearl of Dubai to be opened, however design firm Reef World, in charge of the park's design, said more could follow around the world.

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AirAsia revives Japan offshoot

JUST over a year after severing ties with All Nippon Airways for a planned joint-venture low-cost carrier in Japan (**TD** 26 Jun 2013), AirAsia has announced plans for a new joint-venture in the market.

Again adopting the name AirAsia Japan, the new offshoot will be formed in conjunction with three Japanese businesses specialising in IT, manufacturing,

pharmaceuticals & sports goods.

AirAsia will hold a majority 49% stake in the new venture and has appointed Yoshinori Odagiri as the startup ceo for the carrier.

The carrier aims to operate both domestic and international flights, according to an overview of the new company.

Current plans are for AirAsia Japan to be in the sky and operating by next year.

AirAsia founder Tony Fernandes expressed his delight at being able to take a second bite at the Japanese low-cost cherry.

"I am more confident than ever that AirAsia Japan, led by Odi (Odagiri Yoshinori) with the strong partnership we have with our new investors, will continue to realize our vision to revolutionize the low-cost carrier segment of Japan."

AirAsia's previous partner in the project, ANA, eventually went ahead by itself and launched Vanilla Air, a low-cost subsidiary in Japan separate to its Peach and ANA Wings business units.

Vegas transport site

A NEW website providing details on tourist transport and aimed at travellers planning a visit to Las Vegas has been launched.

RideTheStrip.com includes info on bus services along The Strip as well as airport transfer services.

Status for Great Trail

PERU'S ancient Qhapaq Nan road system, otherwise known as the Great Trail, has been bestowed with UNESCO World Heritage Status, becoming the country's 12 World Heritage site.

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Etihad India upgauge

DOUBLE-DAILY services have been introduced between Abu Dhabi and Bangalore, Chennai and Kozhikode in India by UAE National airline, Etihad Airways.

The capacity increase builds on the introduction of double daily services to Kochi last month and both Mumbai & Delhi in Nov - part of EY's long-term development plan for India.

Flights to Hyderabad will also jump to double-daily from 01 Oct.

CEO James Hogan yesterday said: "India continues to play an important role in our growth plans," where it last year achieved a 20% increase in pax traffic compared to 12 months earlier.

Travelport Hilton pact

TRAVELPORT has extended its GDS full content agreement with Hilton Worldwide, enabling travel agents globally to continue to access the group's more than 4,100 hotels across 11 brands in 92 countries and territories.

Tempo 15% comm

THROUGHOUT Jul, Tempo Holidays is offering travel agents 15% commission on all river cruise bookings in 2014 and 2015.

The firm is also offering a 2-for-1 deal on the Classical Rhine River Cruise between Amsterdam and Basel (for travel until 30 Oct) and the Danube Rhapsody round-trip voyage ex Passau (for travel until 14 Aug) on select cabins aboard *Amadeus Princess*.

New Hyatt owners

OWNERSHIP of the 240-room Park Hyatt Hotel in Melbourne officially changed hands to Hong Kong-based Fu Wah International Group at a ceremony on Mon.

The \$130 million deal with the Government of Singapore Investment Corp marks Fu Wah Intl's first significant foray into the Australian property market.

Senior director of CBRE Hotels Australia Wayne Bunz said the Vic capital was a priority destination in Australia for foreign capital.

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VA/DL incenti winners

THE 10 lucky winners of the recent joint Virgin Australia/Delta Air Lines incentive to New York (**TD** 19 Mar) have been named.

Congrats to Emily Xu, HRG; Jade Peacock, CT Connections, Francine Griffiths, Globetrotter; Kate Louise Ainsworth, NGT Travel; Hannah Richmond, WTP; Georgina Thomas, Travel Beyond; Meena Mirza, Macquarie Travel Centre; Blair Leslie; Mosman Travel Specialists; Adrian O'Connor, BCD Corporate Travel and Lori Chadband, Showgroup.

The consultants have won a five day premium experience to the Big Apple, flying Business Class on both VA and DL, accom in Times Square courtesy of Starwood, tickets to the Delta SkySuite at Yankee Stadium, and capped off with passes to see Bruno Mars & Pharrell Williams perform at Madison Square Garden.

Fiji locals fare promo

FIJIANS are being offered a 30% discount on Fiji Airways' domestic fares as part of the carrier's first anniversary since adopting its new name.

The offer applies to limited seats on sectors between Nadi, Suva, Savusavu, Taveuni and Kadavu, and is valid for travel until Oct when booked before 30 Sep.

TravelManagers Vanuatu famil



VANUATU Tourism Office and Air Vanuatu recently hosted this group of TravelManagers personal travel managers on a famil to the South Pacific holiday destination.

The exclusive trip gave the PTMs from NSW, ACT, Vic and Qld an opportunity to up-skill their knowledge on Vanuatu's latest accommodation and sightseeing options for their clients, staying in Port Vila and splitting up to explore Tanna and Espiritu Santo.

Pictured from left are Julie Anderson; business partnership manager Northern NSW, and TravelManagers PTMs: Julie Smith, Nicolle Scalongne, Christine Ashton, Alister Pardew, Karen Doyle, Michelle Srzich, with Anne Morris - Vanuatu Tourism Office, Debra Bean, Kari Boys, Toni Mees, Matthew Halloran and Michelle Schulze.

HND-YYZ route debut

AIR Canada has introduced new daytime daily services between Toronto and Tokyo Haneda, the Star Alliance carrier's fifth Asian destination served from YYZ.

Flights have launched utilising Boeing 777-300ER aircraft but will transition to 787-8 *Dreamliner* jets later this month.

AC is the sole carrier operating the route to Haneda.

Orient-Exp new name

THE Orient-Express Hotels Ltd brand is no more following approval from shareholders to rebrand as Belmond Ltd, with effect from 01 Jul.

President and ceo John M. Scott said the brand repositioning aligns the business to its primary luxury brand of the same name.

KLM: soup for you!

PASSENGERS flying in World Business Class with KLM Royal Dutch Airlines now have the choice of vegetarian soup as an alternate starter, introduced due to public demand for more options.

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Luxury Leaders Forum

EXPERTS in the field of luxury travel will participate in a Thought Leaders Forum, to take place at Luxperience 2014 next month & discussing the future direction of high-end luxury travel.

Speakers will include Healing Hotels of the World md Ann Biging and Adventure Travel Trade Association executive director Chris Chesak, who will speak on their areas of personal expertise.

Aqua Expeditions ceo Francesco Galli Zugaro will also take part, discussing how to create unique experiences to uncharted places.

Hertz offers Jaguars

JAGUAR F-TYPE Coupe vehicles have been added as the Hero car of the Hertz Dream Collection in five European countries as part of a partnership with the carmaker.

The luxury vehicle can now be booked in Spain, France, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands, with Hertz holding exclusive rights.

Win with Austrian

This week **TD & Austrian** is giving 12 readers the chance to win a \$50 Myer voucher & 1 reader the chance to win a Nespresso



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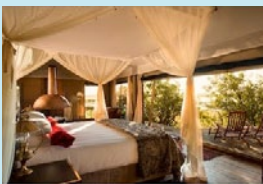
WELCOME to Accommodation Updates, *Travel Daily's* Wednesday feature. If your property has undergone some recent changes you would like to make the industry aware of, send a brief description with an image to accomupdates@traveldaily.com.au.



Perched right on the NSW/Qld border, **Twin Towns Clubs & Resorts** has unveiled five new event and meeting rooms following a \$7m outlay. The rooms, named Bay, River, Border, Wharf and Horizon, offer floor-to-ceiling glass windows with ocean and harbour views and sound-proofing technology. The club's dining area and bar have also been upgraded and refurbished with new fittings.



Starwood has spent US\$50 million on a major upgrade of the **Sheraton Rio Hotel & Resort**, which opened just ahead of the World Cup. The only beachfront property in Rio now offers fully redesigned guest rooms and suites as well as a new lobby, restaurants and bars, fitness centre and Shine Spa. A second phase of work will begin from Sep.



Zarafa Camp, located in the Selinda Reserve in Botswana has opened brand new Dhow Suites, which it claims is one of the largest tented suites in Africa. Offering floor space of more than 2,200sqf, the suites offer a private entrance and safari vehicle along with its own chef and guide. Suites offer two bedrooms, central living area, pool and fireplace, all separated from the main camp.

Aircalin introduces new livery



NEW aircraft livery has been introduced by Aircalin on a newly acquired two-class Airbus A320.

The theme of the aircraft is based on the natural wonders of New Caledonia and reflects the spirit of the country and the ancestral land holders, SB said.

In a mark of recognition for the important relationship of the Australia (OZ) and New Caledonia (NC) route for the carrier, the

A320 has been designated the registration code of F-OZNC.

The aircraft will be deployed primarily on routes between Noumea and Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne.

Lego Asian expansion

JAPAN will become the newest home of a Legoland theme park following the announcement that Merlin Entertainments will spend £185m (AU\$335m) on a new park in the city of Nagoya.

Initial plans released by the firm show a park layout with room for hotels or extensions to be added in due course, if or as needed.

Once open by 2017, the park will be the second Legoland in Asia, following Malaysia, with a park also slated for Dubai in 2016.

Merlin chief Nick Varney said the brand had potential to open up to 20 parks around the world, with a target of opening in a new destination "every 2 to 3 years".

Homewood in NYC

HILTON Worldwide has brought its Homewood Suites by Hilton brand to New York City, debuting its first all-suite hotel this week.

The 293-suite Homewood Suites New York/Midtown Manhattan Times Square South is located three blocks from Times Square and states its rooms are 25% larger than the city average.

Other facilities include a rooftop deck, garden terrace, boardroom and fitness centre.

Wednesday 2nd July 2014

Travel Daily
First with the news



ITA Buttrose was among the many travel industry guests who raved about The Residences in Sydney's Centennial Park at the official opening last night.

The Residences are two heritage cottages which have been carefully restored and refurbished as boutique self-contained, short-stay accommodation experiences.

They consist of the Superintendents Residence built in 1891 and the Rangers Cottage built in 1898 and will be operated by the family behind The Hughenden Boutique Hotel, a well-established hotel in Woollahra.

The Hughenden Hotel gm James Ruben said The Residences will offer five-star full hotel service, modern amenities, wi-fi, a breakfast of bespoke products, including Centennial Park Honey from the Park's own bee hives.

"These buildings are original, exquisite Victorian-style cottages that are being offered to the public to enjoy, and we will ensure no guest will leave without having a memorable time," he said.

The Superintendants Cottage costs \$3,200 per night, but for

that you get four-bedrooms, three-bathrooms, dining room seating eight people, a study and breakfast included.

The three-bedroom Rangers Cottage is a little less at \$1,900 per night with a combined living, dining room.

"I think what they've done is fantastic," media icon & Centennial Park Trustee, Ita Buttrose told *TD*.

"The feel of the place is gorgeous, they've really respected the heritage,"

"I think people who are coming here for events will love it, and tourists will like it as well as they'll be able to stay in one of the greatest parks, surrounded by horse riding, cycling, native flora and fauna, formal gardens and a vibrant range of community events on the doorstep," Buttrose added.

Pictured from left are James Ruben, general manager The Hughenden Hotel; Kim Ellis, executive director Sydney Parklands & Botanic Gardens; Suzanne Gerbay, The Hughenden Hotel, Woollahra & Ita Buttrose, Trustee, Centennial Park.

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Confidential applications to Philippa Baker on 0404 842384 or email Philippa@alexander-associates.com.au

NSW parks mapping

GOOGLE has partnered with the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service to carry out mapping of 16 of the state's National Parks for Google Street View Trekker.

Paris to hike tax 500%

HOTELIERS and tourism chiefs in France have joined with the Tourism Minister to slam a proposed 500% increase to the "tourist tax", which will be paid as a levy on top of hotel stays.

The proposal is now before the French Senate, and if passed, will see travellers pay up to £6.40 in Paris per room night, up from the current £1.20.

Funds raised from the tax would be put towards public transport infrastructure, however France's Tourism Minister says it has the ability to undermine the sector.

Atout France director Patrick Benhamou told **TD** it was too early to say whether the proposal will affect arrivals but more will be known after the visit to Australia this month by Minister Delegate for Tourism Fleur Pellerin.

Accor ceo Sebastien Bazin said the tax would penalise tourism.

Sabre Expedia pact

A **STRATEGIC** technology agreement for the provision of hotel content has been signed between Sabre Corporation and the Expedia Affiliate Network.

The deal will see thousands of new properties added to the Sabre Travel Marketplace for booking by Sabre agents globally.

Further, Expedia will drive the development of 'ZoomandGo', a new map-based hotel shopping app in the Sabre Red App Centre.

Quest digs in to WA market

QUEST Serviced Apartments ceo Zed Sanjana was on hand in Perth this week as ground was broken on three new developments in Western Australia (**TD** yesterday).

Sanjana said the firm is taking advantage of favourable economic conditions in the state as it moved forward with its ambitious growth strategy, which will see a total of five new properties added - three of which are in Perth.

"Demand for extended stay accommodation is currently exceeding supply in Australia, nowhere more so than in Western Australia," he said.

"Perth has leading occupancy rates with high room yield growth which is set to continue thanks to the State Government's commitment to growing the economy," Sanjana explained.

"The demand in the West is being primarily driven by the



corporate market and we feel the time is right to capitalise on these strong economic indicators and push our growth."

WA Premier Colin Barnett commended the investment Quest had pledged to the state.

"It is good to know that companies such as Quest are investing in WA to ensure we can continue to provide high quality accommodation options to the increasing number of corporate travellers visiting the state," Barnett said yesterday.

Zed Sanjana is **pictured** above (right) with Andrew Weisz from Quest and Eleni Evangel MLA, Member for Perth on the site of Quest Kings Park Road.

DPS terminals ready

FINAL preparatory works are now being carried out on both the domestic and int'l airport terminals at Bali's Ngurah Rai Airport after major renovations.

Operations at both improved terminals are expected to begin later this month.

This will see domestic flights move from a corner of the int'l terminal, which in turn will create more space for departing international passengers.

Savuti 'sleep-outs'

WILDERNESS Safaris' Savuti Camp in Botswana has introduced a new 'sleep-out' deck for guests wanting a secluded up-close-and-personal wilderness experience in the Linyanti Swamps.

Wildlife that can be viewed from the deck include hippo, buffalo, waterbuck, kudu, impala & more.

The undercover 'Hides' feature bed rolls, mosquito nets & toilets.

CLICK HERE for more details.

WIN A TRIP TO MAURITIUS

In July, **TD** is giving readers the chance to win a holiday to Mauritius, courtesy of **Club Med and Air Mauritius**.

The prize includes return economy class fares to Mauritius with Air Mauritius, airport transfers and six nights accommodation at either Club Med Albion or La Pointe aux Canonnières, for two.

Every day this month **TD** will ask a different question about Club Med or Air Mauritius. The subscriber with the most correct entries and the most creative response to the final question will win this holiday.

Email answers to: clubmedcomp@traveldaily.com.au

Q2: What is the name of the specialty restaurant at La Plantation d'Albion, Mauritius?

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